

CHAPTER V -- EAST BASE TO VALPARAISO

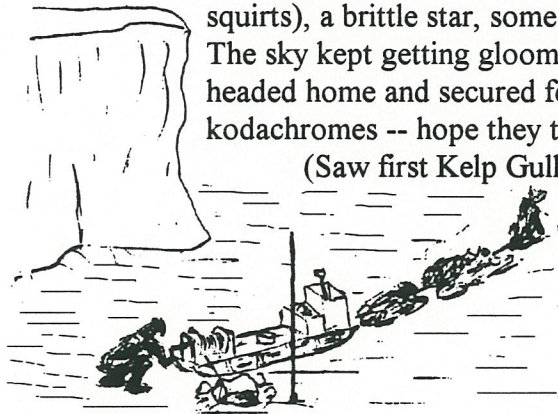
OCTOBER 1, 1940 - APRIL 28, 1941

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1940

Today has ended a week of glorious weather. Bright sunshine and around zero in the shade -- just perfect -- warm enough so you can work short periods without your mitts and cool enough to make you want to keep busy.

I hitched a five dog team to my sliding marine laboratory and set out to do some dredging. I'd park the sled and then dig through the ice with a long ice chisel. Fastening the snap-bucket dredge to the cable on my windlass, I'd let her drop, noting the depth, (I hit 320 feet today in front of the big glacier.) and then slowly crank her in, dumping the contents into waiting receptacles. The bottom here consists mainly of blue glacial mud or clay with scattered rocks. Today, in addition to the usually assortment of worms, I brought up a couple tunicates (sea squirts), a brittle star, some scallops, sponges, sea cucumber, and a lot of et cetera. The sky kept getting gloomier and the breeze kept getting windier, so I finally headed home and secured for the approaching gale. Snapped a couple kodachromes -- hope they turn out.

(Saw first Kelp Gull)



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1940

Guiltily, I take my pen in hand after forsaking this little volume for almost two weeks. A number of events have taken place, but the most important detail was another bath by yours truly. I was pretty dirty, but not nearly as dirty as I had supposed. All in all, the Antarctic's a pretty clean place -- at least it would be if it weren't for seal blubber and other biological refuse.

We dug out the plane again but the crusted surface was not strong enough and the Condor, with full throttle, could only make 20 to 30 m.p.h., so once again operations are held up awaiting favorable flying conditions.

The seals are pupping now and we are careful to only kill the big old bulls. I printed up some pictures yesterday and can see that some will make nifty enlargements on my return. Mailbag was Friday -- a snappy program from Portland, Ore., and a couple messages for me.



**DON'T BE SHOCKED --
ITS ONLY ME TAKING A BATH**